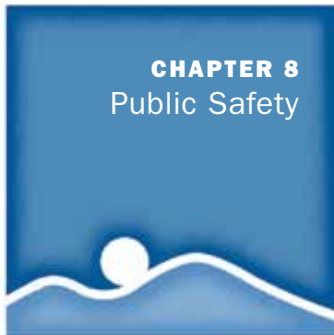


CHAPTER 8

Public Safety



Policing and fire protection are fundamental City services. Public safety responsibilities evolve as the community's needs change. Today they place greater emphasis on crime prevention, technology, hazardous materials and planning for major disasters including earthquakes, floods and fires.

The Element begins with a Context section, followed by a Looking Forward section that highlights opportunities, challenges and key strategies (page 175). The final section outlines the specific goals and policies for each topic area (page 176).

Context

In 2011, Mountain View had about 100 police officers and 70 fire-fighters. The administrative offices of the Police Department and the Fire Department are headquartered in the Police-Fire Building on Villa Street. Response time to calls for service is one of the primary measures of how well the departments serve the community. Both departments also manage other programs to ensure Mountain View's safety and security.

The Context section is organized according to these topics:

- Police (page 172)
- Fire, Emergency Response and Hazardous Materials (page 172)
- Emergency Preparedness (page 173)

Police

The Police Department's primary mission is to maintain safety and protect the community through law enforcement, crime prevention and criminal apprehension. Mountain View practices "community-oriented policing," an approach that uses partnerships, organizational structure and problem solving to address the conditions that give rise to crime, social disorder and fear of crime. Some of the community-

policing programs are Neighborhood Watch and Business Watch groups, school resource officers, a Youth Services Unit that focuses on anti-gang activities and several volunteer programs including the Police Activities League and an Explorer post.

Mountain View is divided into four geographic beats. Although beats differ in size, the department's goal is to respond to high-priority calls in less than four minutes. Calls for police service, the majority for property crimes, are generally spread evenly throughout the city.

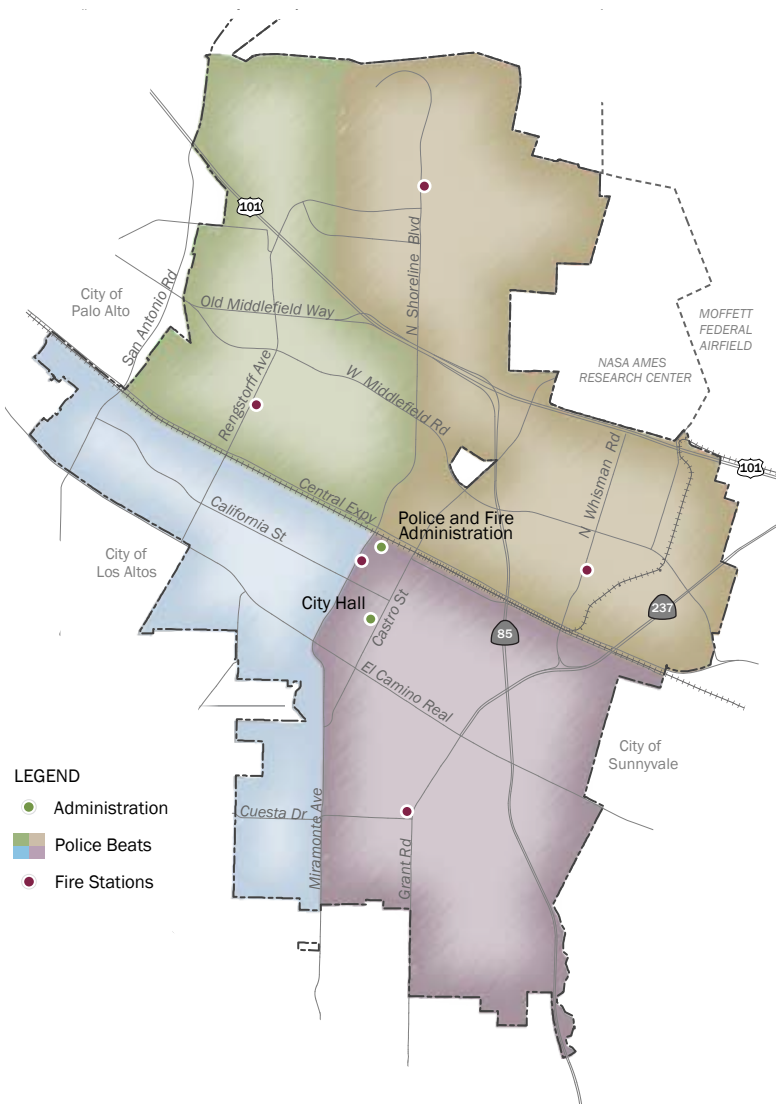
Real-time communication is an important part of policing. Mountain View participates in the Alert Santa Clara County system, which uses technologies to notify residents in emergencies. The police also use the Internet and social media to send out alerts and updates.

Fire, Emergency Response and Hazardous Materials

The Fire Department provides fire protection and emergency medical services. Firefighters are assigned to five stations strategically located throughout Mountain View (Figure 8.1). About 65% of the department's approximately 5,000 annual emergency calls are for medical service, and about 20 of the firefighters are paramedics. The department regularly achieves its goal of responding to each emergency call within six minutes.

The department reviews all new development plans, including building design and access for emergency vehicles, to

Figure 8.1: Public Safety Facilities



ensure they meet fire and safety codes. It also inspects industrial and commercial businesses for compliance with fire codes, with special attention to day care centers, convalescent and elderly care facilities and other places where people assemble such as restaurants, churches and clubs.

Since the 1970s, the department has had an increasingly important role in protecting residents from environmental hazards. It enforces local hazardous-materials storage codes, state regulations on underground chemical storage tanks and industrial waste discharge and federal and state regulations on the control of industrial waste and storm runoff. Firefighters respond first if hazardous or toxic gases or liquids are released accidentally.

As part of its annual permit process, the department inspects more than 300 businesses that use or store hazardous materials, requiring them to submit information about their use and storage. It also monitors businesses that generate harmful oils, greases and heavy metals to ensure that these by-products are removed or treated before wastewater is discharged into the sanitary sewer. Wastewater flows to the Palo Alto Regional Water Quality Control Plant and, after treatment, into San Francisco Bay.

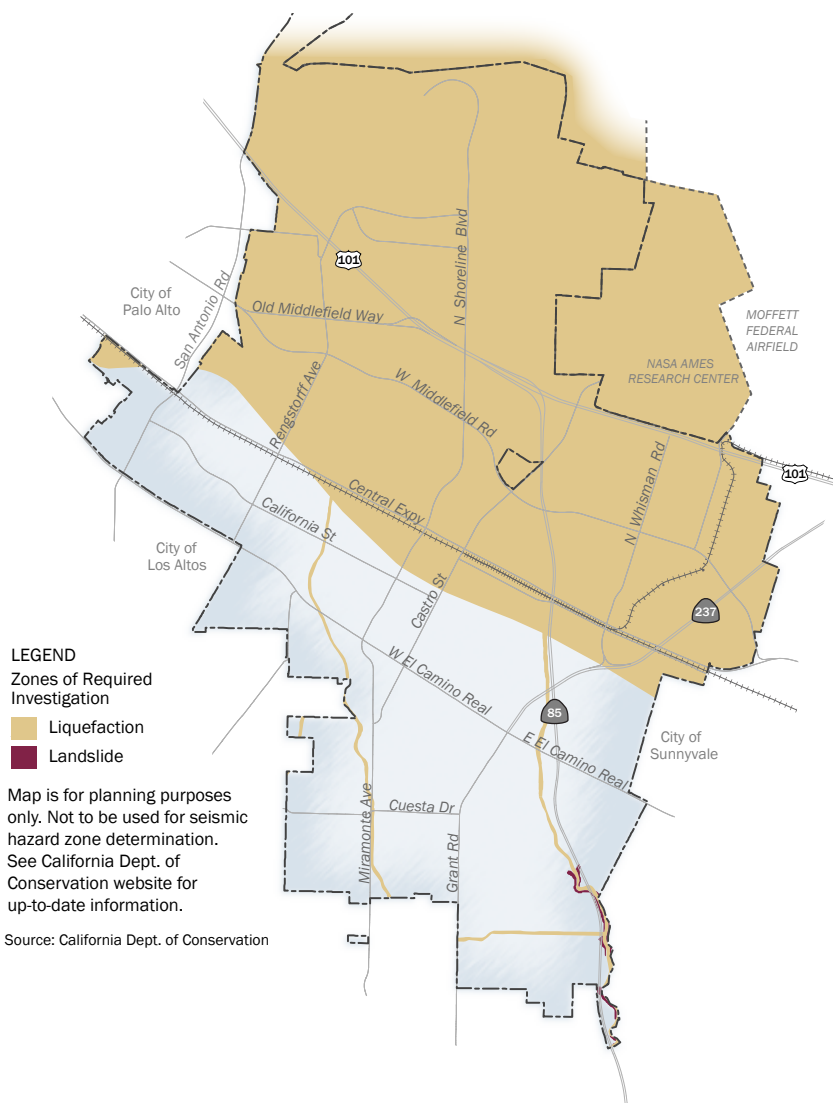
Emergency Preparedness

A large-scale emergency or disaster can seriously diminish or disrupt the City's ability to provide services and ensure public safety. Emergen-

cies could be a natural disaster such as earthquakes or flooding, technological disruption or a national security incident. Emergency preparedness means the activities undertaken before an emergency occurs so there is an effective and well-managed response.

Earthquakes are a significant disaster risk in the Bay Area. There are many ways to prepare for an earthquake to minimize its damage. The California

Figure 8.2: Seismic Hazard Zones



Geological Survey maps areas of liquefaction and landslide risk (Figure 8.2). These are areas where some new developments may need special mitigations to protect people in cases of permanent ground displacement. The California Building Code has requirements for construction that reduce the risks of buildings falling down in an earthquake.

Mountain View has an Office of Emergency Services and an Emergency Response Plan. The Emergency Plan clearly delineates lines of authority and includes standardized processes, protocols and procedures that emergency responders at every level of government will use in a disaster. Officials will coordinate and manage the City's emergency responses at the Emergency Operations Center in the Police-Fire Administration building. During a disaster, especially one affecting neighboring cities, the police and fire departments will be able to respond only to high-priority incidents that endanger lives. To maximize emergency preparedness resources, all City employees are required to stay at work or return to work, if possible, to carry out the City's Emergency Response Plan.

Residents should also prepare their own response plans. The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program is the primary preparedness program for residents. This program trains residents in basic disaster response skills such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization and disaster medical operations. Using their classroom and exercise training,



CERT members can assist others in their neighborhood or workplace after a disaster when firefighters and police officers are not immediately available to help. Neighborhood associations actively recruit new CERT members, conduct exercises and, in some instances, buy emergency supplies. The Office of Emergency Services also works with businesses and schools to ensure they conduct evacuation drills and have emergency plans and proper training.

The most effective disaster planning strives to eliminate or reduce the potential for hazards before a disaster occurs. As of 2012, Mountain View, along with 100 other cities and counties in the Bay Area, is preparing a multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan to address regional natural disasters such as earthquakes, flooding and sea-level rise.

Looking Forward

Following are some distinct opportunities and challenges the City of Mountain View is likely to face over the life of the General Plan, and key strategies for addressing them. These strategies should be top priorities to advance the Public Safety Element goals and policies described in the next section and inform decision making over the life of the General Plan.

Shared service agreements. Mountain View has several shared service agreements with neighboring cities regarding mutual aid and sharing Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team resources.

As cities experience budget difficulties, more focus will be given to sharing public safety functions and resources including dispatch services, centralized records management, evidence storage, equipment, emergency planning, arson investigation and fire prevention. A sub-regional approach to public safety may provide a more efficient and effective way of delivering services to Mountain View residents.

Technology and training. As the public uses more advanced technologies, the Police Department must continue to keep pace with the latest in law enforcement and communications technology and training. This means working closely with neighboring cities through mutual aid and shared information as well as undergoing training to respond to cyber crime.

Calls for medical service. Almost two-thirds of calls to the Fire Department are for medical emergencies, not fires. Emergency medical training and access to special medical equipment are high priorities for first responders.

Hazardous materials and neighboring uses. Some businesses in Mountain View use hazardous materials or produce them as by-products. It is important to maintain detailed information about these materials and processes to ensure neighboring uses such as housing, schools and child-care centers are protected from accidental release of hazardous materials.

Goals and Policies

Public Safety (PSA) goals are broad statements describing the City's future direction. Policies provide more specific direction to achieve each goal. Actions for putting these goals and policies into effect are detailed separately in the General Plan's Action Plan.

Police and Fire Service

Police and fire service policies strive for a high level of service to the community.

Goal PSA-1: A high level of community safety with police, fire and emergency response services that meet or exceed industry-accepted service standards.

Policies

PSA 1.1: Adequate staffing. Maintain adequate police and fire staffing, performance levels and facilities to serve the needs of the community.

PSA 1.2: Design for safety. Support and promote crime prevention and fire safety strategies in the design of new developments.

Police and Community Safety

Police and community safety policies aim to reduce crime and improve the safety of the community.

Goal PSA-2: A total commitment to reducing criminal activity and instilling a feeling of safety and security in the community.

Policies

PSA 2.1: Community policing. Provide superior community-oriented police services.

PSA 2.2: Sense of safety. Ensure a sense of safety throughout the community.

PSA 2.3: Service and effectiveness. Explore ways to improve service delivery and police effectiveness.

PSA 2.4: Youth interaction. Expand opportunities for positive police and youth interaction.

PSA 2.5: Regional partnerships. Participate in regional partnerships to reduce crime and respond to emergencies.

PSA 2.6: Victims and special needs. Provide support to crime victims and people with special needs.

PSA 2.7: Police service levels and facilities. Ensure Mountain View Police Department service levels and facilities meet demands from new growth and development.

Fire and Hazardous Materials

Fire and hazardous materials policies protect the community from fire and environmental hazards.

Goal PSA-3: *A community protected from fire, hazardous materials and environmental contamination.*

Policies

PSA 3.1: Minimized losses. Minimize property damage, injuries and loss of life from fire.

PSA 3.2: Protection from hazardous materials. Prevent injuries and environmental contamination due to the uncontrolled release of hazardous materials through prevention and enforcement of fire and life safety codes.

PSA 3.3: Development review. Carry out development review procedures that encourage effective identification and remediation of contamination and protection of public and environmental health and safety.

PSA 3.4: Oversight agencies. Work with local, state and federal oversight agencies to encourage remediation of contamination and protection of public and environmental health and safety.

PSA 3.5: Peak water supply. Ensure sufficient peak-load water supply to address fire and emergency response needs when approving new development.

Emergency Preparedness

Emergency preparedness policies focus on planning and education to prepare the community for disasters and emergencies.

Goal PSA-4: *A well-prepared community that has developed plans to minimize risks from environmental and human-induced disasters.*

Policies

PSA 4.1: Emergency response plan. Maintain and update the City's emergency response plans.

PSA 4.2: Natural disasters. Minimize impacts of natural disasters.

Goal PSA-5: *The protection of life and property from seismic hazards.*

Policies

PSA 5.1: New development. Ensure new development addresses seismically induced geologic hazards.

PSA 5.2: Alquist-Priolo zones. Development shall comply with the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act.

PSA 5.3: Technology. Use effective technologies to inform the community about potential hazards and emergency response.

PSA 5.4: Utility design. Ensure new underground utilities, particularly water and natural gas lines, are designed to meet current seismic standards.

